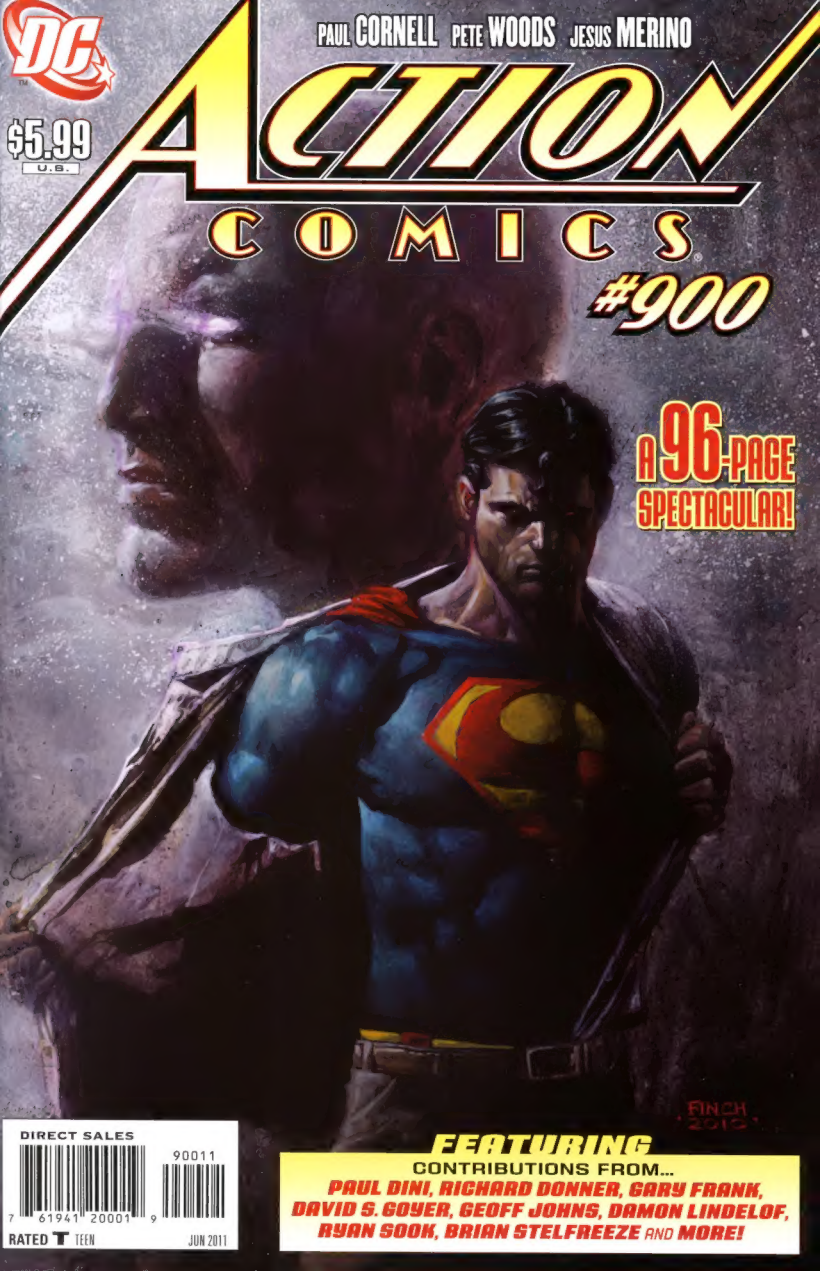
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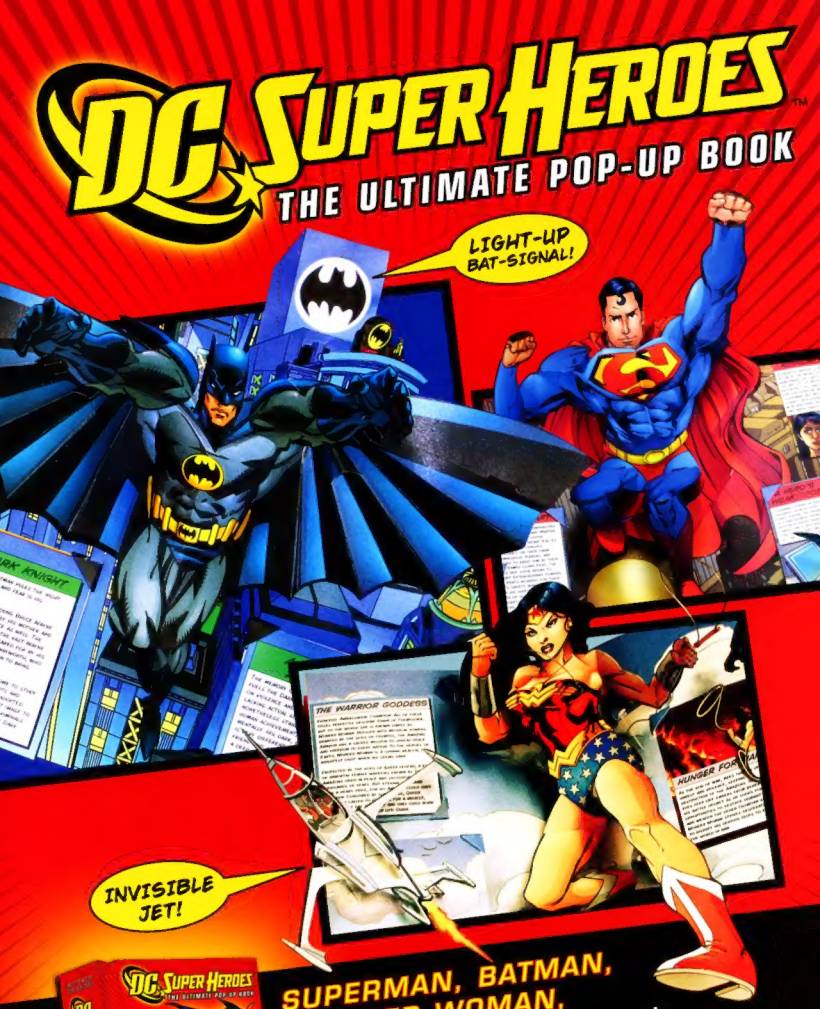

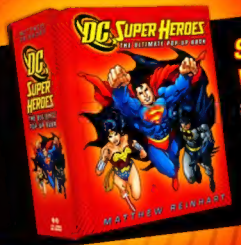

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LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY
BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS

WHERE IS HE?!
WHERE'S DOOMSDAY?
HE BEAT STEEL TO WITHIN... WELL--
--THEY CAN'T BE SURE HE WAS STILL ALIVE.
"THEN HE PICKED STEEL UP. THE FOOTAGE SHOWS A BURST OF LIGHT AND THEM...VANISHING."
"THEN THERE'LL BE SOMETHING I CAN FOLLOW."
SUPERMAN, THIS.. THE FIRST TIME YOU FOUGHT DOOMSDAY...
DON'T WORRY... MS. LANE. EVERYBODY--
--I'M BACK.
AND I WILL WIN THIS.
THE BLACK RING
FINALE
REIGN OF DOOMSDAY
GO GET HIM, SUPERMAN!
"GO GET HIM"?! SERIOUSLY, FRANK? FIRST TIME THOSE TWO WENT AT IT, DOOMSDAY KILLED HIM."
"THIS IS SUPERMAN, BILL--"
"--HE KNOWS WHAT HE'S FACING NOW.
"HE'LL GET HIM."
WPD
911
BORN IN SMALLVILLE BUT BELIEVING HIMSELF SUPERIOR, HE MURDERED HIS FATHER TO ESCAPE SMALL-TOWN AMERICA AND BUILT AN EMPIRE ON HIS GENIUS. THE SWORN ENEMY OF SUPERMAN, HE HAS VOWED THAT THE WORLD WILL TURN ITS BACK ON THE MAN OF STEEL AND INSTEAD EMBRACE HUMANITY'S CHAMPION... LEX LUTHOR
ROCKETED TO EARTH FROM THE DOOMED PLANET KRYPTON, THE BABY KAL-EL WAS FOUND AND RAISED BY JONATHAN AND MARTHA KENT IN SMALLVILLE, KANSAS. NOW AN ADULT, CLARK KENT FIGHTS FOR TRUTH, JUSTICE & THE AMERICAN WAY AS... SUPERMAN
PAUL CORNELL writer
PETE WOODS artist BRAD ANDERSON colorist [main sequence]
JESUS MERINO artist BLOND colorist [reign sequence]
DAN JURGENS & NORM RAPMUND; RAGS MORALES; ARDIAN SYAF; JAMAL IGLE & JON SIBAL; GARY FRANK artists
ANDERSON colorist [memory lane sequence] • ROB LEIGH letterer
DAVID FINCH cover • ADAM HUGHES and ALEX ROSS variant covers
WIL MOSS associate editor • MATT IDELSON editor
very special thanks to NEIL GAIMAN
SUPERMAN created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER
DEATH created by NEIL GAIMAN & MIKE DRINGENBERG

ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE SUN, AMONG THE DEBRIS THAT WAS ONCE NEW KRYPTON, THERE FLOATS AN INTANGIBLE, INVSIBLE, ABANDONED ALIEN SPACE STATION.
HERE, DOOMSDAY BROUGHT HIS FIVE CAPTIVES.*
*AS READERS OF (DEEP INTAKE OF BREATH) ICONS: STEEL #1, OUTSIDERS #37, JLA #55, SUPERMAN/BATMAN ANNUAL #5 AND SUPERBOY #6 ALREADY KNOW. --Winded Matt
INSIDE...
DOOMSDAY!

YEAH, WE KNOW! HOW CLOSE IS HE BEHIND YOU?
HE GOT *YOU* GUYS, TOO?! HOW *LONG* WAS I UNCONSCIOUS?
I...THINK I LOST HIM. THESE CORRIDORS, THEY SEEM TO--
NOT "SEEM." THEY *LITERALLY* GO ON *FOREVER.*
MY SENSORS... THE INTERIOR OF WHATEVER THIS PLACE IS... IT'S UNBOUNDED.
EVERY CORRIDOR TURNS BACK ON ITSELF. THERE ISN'T A *DOOR* ANYWHERE.
DOOMSDAY ATTACKED US INDIVIDUALLY, BROUGHT US ALL HERE UNCONSCIOUS.
IT'S THE PERFECT CAGE.
MICE CONFINED WITH A CAT. IF IT TAKES DECADES, HE WILL, EVENTUALLY, KILL US.
THOSE OF YOU WHO REQUIRE FOOD AND WATER WILL GO MUCH SOONER.
THE *FINALITY* OF IT IS... APPEALING.
YEAH? THEN HOW ABOUT YOU GO FIND HIM AND VOLUNTEER?
I *INTEND* TO. AND TO BRING YOU *ALL* THAT JOY OF FINALITY AS WELL.
WHY WERE *YOU* PUT IN HERE WITH *US,* ANYWAY?
I HAVE A THEORY ABOUT THAT--

--HE'S HERE TO KEEP THINGS CHAOTIC.
STOP US FROM...WORKING TOGETHER.
WHICH MEANS THERE MUST BE SOMETHING WE CAN DO.
INTERESTING. HE NOW SEEMS ABLE TO... ALTER HIS POWER SET TO COUNTER HIS OPPONENT. HE WAS ABLE TO REPLICATE MY ARMOR--
AND HE DID A PRETTY GOOD CYBORG SUPERMAN IMPRESSION, TOO.
SO DID DOOMSDAY USE TACTILE TELEKINESIS WHEN HE ATTACKED YOU GUYS? I TOTALLY DIDN'T SEE THAT COMING.
THE FACT THAT ALL OF US HAVE "S"s ON OUR CHEST...THAT WE'RE BEING KEPT BUSY...WOULD SEEM TO SUGGEST--
SOMETHING IS APPROACHING!
GRAGGHH!

--SUPERMAN'S MEANT TO BE TRAPPED HERE, TOO!
I THINK DOOMSDAY BROUGHT US HERE--

"--TO KEEP US FROM INTERFERING WITH SOME LARGER PLAN!"
I HAVE ACHIEVED ENORMOUS POWER!
MY REACH EXTENDS ACROSS THE UNIVERSE!
BUT FIRST THINGS FIRST, LEX
NO GRAND DISPLAYS. WISDOM. JUSTICE. RESPONSIBILITY.
DO WHAT'S RIGHT FOR EARTH.
SO, WHERE IS HE?
OH. HE'S JUST ABOUT TO JOIN HIS DISCIPLES IN THEIR TRAP WELL. NO NEED FOR THAT NOW.
IT'S TIME TO COMPLETE MY LIFE'S WORK.

?!
...BY DESTROYING SUPERMAN.

LUTHOR! MY GOD. WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!
ARE YOU BEHIND DOOMSDAY?!
I'M BEHIND ALMOST EVERYTHING NOW
I HAVE THE POWER OF A GOD. THAT'S WHY YOU'RE BREATHING IN THE VACUUM OF SPACE.
YOU'RE WELCOME.
JUDGING BY THE STAR PATTERNS, WE'RE SOMEWHERE IN THE CARINA-SAGITTARIUS ARM OF THE MILKY WAY--
--ABOUT SIX AND A HALF THOUSAND LIGHT-YEARS FROM EARTH.
LOTS OF STAR FORMATION OUT HERE. NOT MUCH CIVILIZATION.
AND YOU'RE SUFFUSED WITH... PHANTOM ZONE RADIATION...?
WHICH MEANS--!

"--THERE' A DOORWAY TO THE PHANTOM ZONE!"
WHAT? OH, I SENSE YOU HAVE SOMEONE YOU CARE ABOUT TRAPPED IN THERE. BUT
--NO!
YOU HAVE BUSINESS--
WITH YOUR GOD!

HOW DID YOU GET THIS POWER?! WHAT IS IT?
I'VE MERGED FORMS WITH WELL. IT WAS ONCE A CHILD, UTTERLY ALIEN LIKE YOU.
"IT EVOLVED IN THE PHANTOM ZONE. THE ONLY ONE OF ITS KIND.
"IT SENSED EMPATHICALLY. IT FOUND THAT ITS UNIVERSE WAS BEING FILLED BY THE CRIMINALS YOUR PEOPLE EXILED THERE.
"THEIR EVERY THOUGHT HURT IT. AND SO IT PREYED ON THEIR PHANTOM FORMS.
"BUT THEY FLED AND HID, AND MORE KEPT COMING.
"SO IT MADE THE BLACK RING OF ENERGY SPHERES, AND USED THEM TO ENTER OUR UNIVERSE, INTENDING TO DESTROY ALL NEGATIVE EMOTION AT THE SOURCE."

I SAVED THE UNIVERSE FROM THAT FATE. I TOOK THE ZONE CHILD'S ENORMOUS POWERS AS MY OWN.
AND THE FIRST THING YOU DID WAS COME AFTER ME?!
AND THE FIRST THING YOU DID IN RESPONSE WAS TO IGNORE ME
YOU STILL CAN'T IMAGINE THAT A HUMAN HAS RISEN ABOVE YOU!
EVEN AT THE MOMENT OF MY GREATEST TRIUMPH, YOU STILL SAW ME AS SOMEONE SMALL, SOMEONE YOU COULD TURN AWAY FROM!
YOU DO NOT TURN YOUR BACK--
--ON ME!

BUT NO.
JUSTICE SHOULD BE CALM
"JUSTICE"?! LUTHOR--!
I DON'T WANT A DEBATE. GRAVITY CAN CLOSE YOUR MOUTH, AND SPACE CAN HOLD YOU THERE
YOU HAVE HELD BACK THE HUMAN RACE FOR SO LONG. THE ULTIMATE PATERNAL SAFETY NET.
A HYPOCRITE WHO TOLD AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT SPECIES TO ASPIRE TO HIS PHYSICAL TYPE.
YOU HAVE FORCED ME TO DO SO MANY TERRIBLE THINGS
BUT IT WAS ALL FOR THIS MOMENT !
--WHEN HUMANITY WILL HAVE ITS REVENGE!
YOU SHED THE ODD DAINTY TEAR, WHEN YOU THINK IT'S APPROPRIATE FOR A HERO TO DO SO.
YOU SMILE LIKE US. FROWN LIKE US--
BUT LET ME SHOW YOU NOW WHAT HUMAN BEINGS HAVE TO GO THROUGH EVERY DAY.
I'LL SHOW YOU HUMAN PAIN!
YARRGGHHH!

LET ME START WITH THE DAY YOU "DIED" AT THE HANDS OF DOOMSDAY
PLEASE HANG ON! THE PARAMEDICS WILL BE HERE ANY SECOND!
PLEASE!
DOOMSDAY IS HE IS HE
YOU STOPPED HIM! YOU SAVED US ALL!
NOW YOU CAN FEEL WHAT THEY FELT, FOR THE FIRST TIME.
LOIS WAS ALWAYS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN YOU
FEEL HOW SHE FELT, RIGHT NOW
THAT'S HOW REAL PEOPLE EXPERIENCE LOSS
COMES AS A SURPRISE TO YOU, DOESN'T IT?
LUTHOR--!
--I KNOW LOSS, LUTHOR!
YOU SIMULATE SUCH KNOWLEDGE. YOU AREN'T HUMAN. YOU ONLY LOOK LIKE US
LET'S TRY

THE DESTRUCTION OF KRYPTON THESE ARE YOUR ALIEN PARENTS I'M SURE YOU CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY'RE SAYING
HOW COLD OF THEM. HOW STRANGE TO SEND THEIR SPORE INTO SPACE
THIS IS WHAT MAKES YOU THINK YOU SYMPATHIZE WITH REFUGEES AND DISASTER VICTIMS ON EARTH. WHY YOU KEEP PURSUING THEIR SMALL NEEDS RATHER THAN CHANGING THE WORLD
BUT REALLY, THIS IS QUITE DIFFERENT.
(NO! NO! THEY LET IT COME TO THIS! WE COULD, ALL HAVE ESCAPED! ALL OF US!)
(MY SON! MY SON!)
(WE'VE ONLY GOT SECONDS.)
(WE'RE GOING TO DIE. HE DOESN'T HAVE TO.)
LUTHOR, YOU DON'T KNOW--!
LUTHOR!
DAGG MYRALES.

AH YES, HERE'S WHERE THE CLOSEST THING YOU EVER HAD TO A SON FOOLISHLY FOLLOWED YOUR EXAMPLE AND SACRIFICED HIMSELF TO SAVE EARTH.
YOU DON'T KNOW THE OTHER HORROR THAT LURKS WITHIN THE SHARDS OF THE PHANTOM ZONE, KAL-EL!
I WISH I'D HEARD THAT AT THE TIME. IT WOULD HAVE CLUED ME IN TO THIS BUSINESS SOONER.
BUT I WAS TOO BUSY SAVING THE WORLD.
DON'T... DON'T MAKE ME EXPERIENCE THIS AGAIN, LUTHOR--
AH...
--I WONDERED WHEN THE HUMAN EMOTION WE EXPERIENCE EVERY DAY WOULD START TO AFFECT YOU.
I CAN KEEP THIS UP FOREVER. I WONDER WHEN YOU'LL BREAK?
THERE GOES YOUR LITTLE REFUGEE.
UP, UP AND AWAY!
CHRIS!
CHRIS!
CHRIS.

AND THERE GOES NEW KRYPTON
ALL THOSE ALIENS TRYING AND FAILING TO INTERACT WITH PEOPLE
AND IT ALL ENDS IN DISASTER
AGAIN.
ARE YOU FEELING THIS NOW?
OR ARE YOU STILL NOBLY PRETENDING?

YOU THINK I DON'T FEEL LIKE YOU DO, LUTHOR?!
IF I'M IN YOUR POWER FOREVER, THEN YOU'LL GET TO THIS EVENTUALLY.
LOOK INTO MY MIND. SEE WHAT CAUSES ME THE MOST PAIN.
SEE WHAT LOSS MEANS TO ME.
IT'LL BE SOME COSMIC SPECTACLE NO DOUBT. THE DEATH OF
WORLDS ?
PA!

WAIT. THAT'S I KNOW THEM.
THAT'S MR AND MRS. KENT.
CLARK KENT'S PARENTS.
YOU'RE CALLING HIM "DA"
BUT THAT MEANS
...
YOU'RE CLARK KENT
YOU SEE, LEX?
WE'RE MORE SIMILAR THAN YOU THINK.

"SIMILAR"?!
YOU'VE BEEN MOCKING ME, RIGHT IN FRONT OF MY FACE, ALL THESE YEARS, AND YOU SAY--?!
I NOW HAVE THE POWER TO SAVE HIM. DO YOU REALIZE THAT? I COULD GO FURTHER BACK IN TIME!
BUT I'M NOT GOING TO
I WAS HAPPY TO BE RID OF WHAT I HAD FOR A FATHER!
BUT YOU YOU GOT THEM!
YOU'RE NOT HUMAN!
YOU DON'T DESERVE TO BE CLARK KENT!
I'LL PUNISH YOU WITH EVERY OUNCE OF PAIN AND HUMILIATION AND REGRET FROM AN ENTIRE HUMAN LIFETIME. DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?! I'LL NEVER STOP!
WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO BREAK YOU?!
WHY WON'T YOU BREAK?!

BECAUSE OF THEM.
THEY MADE ME. SO THAT LATER I COULD MAKE MYSELF.
THEY MADE CLARK KENT.
CLARK KENT IS SUPERMAN.
DO YOUR WORST, LUTHOR.
DO IT FOREVER.
I WON'T BREAK.
ARGGHHHHHH!!!
SKABLAMMMMM

I...MEANT TO DISINTEGRATE HIM!
WHY ISN'T HE DEAD?!
LUTHOR!
LOIS, HOW CAN YOU BE--?!
OH IT'S YOU, MISTER MIND TALKING THROUGH HER.
YES, IT'S ME--!
--OR RATHER, A PROJECTION OF MY CONSCIOUSNESS, USING--
--WELL, NEVER MIND THAT NOW.
I'D LIKE TO HAVE FLED, LUTHOR. BUT I CAN'T. I'M STILL MENTALLY CONNECTED TO THIS THING YOU'VE BECOME.
SO FOR BOTH OUR SAKES, I HAVE TO WARN YOU--!
--THE ZONE CHILD HAS WOKEN.
YOUR CONSCIOUSNESS IS STILL IN CONTROL OF YOUR MERGED FORMS.
BUT IT'S FIGHTING YOU, LIMITING YOUR POWER. ITS OWN POWER IS INFINITE, TERRIFYING--!
BUT IF I'M STILL IN CHARGE, HE CAN'T USE IT AGAINST ME--

...AND I NEED THAT INFINITE POWER!
I NEED IT TO FINALLY DESTROY SUPERMAN!
SO I INTEND TO TAKE IT!

WE'VE LEFT DOOMSDAY AND THE CYBORG BEHIND.
DOOMSDAY WAS SOMEHOW COUNTERING MY HEAT VISION BACK THERE--
--BUT HE DIDN'T SEEM TUNED IN TO THE REST OF YOUR POWERS ANYMORE
HE APPEARS ABLE TO CHANGE HIS POWER SET FOR EACH OF US.
PERHAPS. PERHAPS HE CAN ONLY ANTICIPATE ONE OF US AT A TIME?
NOW WOULDN'T THAT BE--?
--GRAHHH!
NOW THOSE ARE LIKE MY ENERGY BLASTS!
HOW IS HE DOING THIS?!
AND GUYS--!
--LOOK WHO'S BACK!

THAT CORRIDOR... SENSORS SAY...
THAT COULD LEAD TO...VAST DISTANCES... AN ENDLESS DROP...
OKAY--
--IF YOU CAN'T BEAT 'EM--
KA-POW
--LOSE 'EM!

THEY DEALT WITH THE MAIN PROBLEM, CYBES--
--NOW IT'S YOUR TURN!
I THINK NOT. ON MY EXPLORATION OF THIS STATION JUST NOW--
--I DISCOVERED SOMETHING DAUNTING, WHICH YOU ARE ALL STILL BLIND TO.

WHAT?! DOOMSDAY'S BACK ALREADY?!

"ENDLESS," YOU SAID!
"COULD BE," I SAID!

LEARNED YOUR LANGUAGE
CAN'T STOP YOU FROM TAKING my POWER
CAME HERE TO END PAIN
TO END NEGATIVE EMOTION
BUT IT IS MORE COMPLEX HERE.
I CAN CHANGE NATURE OF my POWER
WHEN YOU HAVE IT
...YOU CAN ONLY DO AS I NOW WORLD
AHHH!

OH. INFINITE POWER IS MINE.
AND IN AN INSTANT, THE UNIVERSE CHANGES.

ON AN AUSTRIAN SKI SLOPE...

IT'S HAPPENING! LIKE I SAW IT WOULD WHEN I LOOKED AT LEX'S FUTURE!

SORRY? WHAT IS?

A WAVE OF BLISS RUSHING INSTANTLY ACROSS THE UNIVERSE!

I THOUGHT I FELT HAPPY. AM I GOING TO BE OKAY?

FOR NOW, SURE. ENTROPY HAS STOPPED.

IT'S WHAT THE ZONE CHILD WANTED. THAT'S IT FOR EVERYTHING NEGATIVE!

SO I GET MY FIRST EVER TIME OFF.

FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

WOW, THIS FEELS GREAT!

WHO ARE YOU, BY THE WAY?

AND IN HIS CASTLE HEADQUARTERS, THE IMMORTAL VANDAL SAVAGE...

ABSOLUTE HAPPINESS!

FOR ME AND EVERYONE ELSE!

"THE PROPHECY HAS COME TRUE!

"UNIVERSAL BLISS.

"UNACCUSTOMED BLISS.

"EVERYDAY BLISS."

IS... MINE.

"DOES IT HAVE TO BE FLEETING?"

AM I ILL?

OH... BEAUTIFUL.

AND TERRIBLE.

I CAN DO ANYTHING
YES, LEX--
--I CAN FEEL THE UNIVERSAL HAPPINESS YOU'RE RADIATING.
WITH WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT ME NOW, WITH HOW YOU ARE NOW--
--THINGS HAVE TO CHANGE, DON'T THEY?
YOU CAN MAKE EVERYONE HAPPY NOW, FOREVER!
USE THAT FEELING OF BLISS TO SORT OUT THE UNDERLYING PROBLEMS OF THE UNIVERSE.
BE THE HERO YOU WERE ALWAYS CAPABLE OF BEING!
LISTEN TO HIM, LUTHOR--!

IF YOU WANT TO KEEP THIS INFINITE POWER, TO BE ABLE TO MAKE THINGS BETTER FOR ALL OF US--
--YOU CAN'T USE IT TO DO ANYTHING NEGATIVE.
THE ZONE CHILD MADE SURE OF THAT WITH ITS DYING BREATH.
YOU CAN'T USE IT, JUST TO PICK A RANDOM EXAMPLE--
--TO DESTROY SUPERMAN.
YOU... WEREN'T STILL THINKING OF DOING THAT...
...WERE YOU?

SO...I CAN DO ANYTHING. BE ANYTHING. ACHIEVE ANYTHING
BUT ONLY IF I LEAVE my GREATEST ENEMY. ALIVE. AND...BLISSFULLY HAPPY?
RIGHT. THAT'S IT IN A NUTSHELL.
LEX, YOU CAN FEEL IT!
FEEL ALL THE GOOD YOU CAN DO!
IF YOU CAN JUST LET GO OF THE PAST!
my GREATEST ENEMY, WHO'S BEEN MAKING A FOOL OF ME ALL THESE YEARS.
WHO'S EVEN NOW LECTURING ME ON WHAT I SHOULD DO--
I'M SORRY, SORRY FOR EVERYTHING! FOR ANYTHING! THIS IS TOO IMPORTANT TO--
QUIET!

NoOoOoOoOoOo!
AND STILL HE'S NOT DEAD! STILL IT'S NOT OVER!
"WHY?!
BECAUSE INFINITE POWER FLED YOU THE INSTANT YOU MADE YOUR DECISION!
AND I TELL YOU WHAT--
--I'M FREE TO GO NOW. SO I'LL LEAVE YOU TO YOUR--
--TRAGEDY? LEX?
WHAT'S--?
GET AWAY FROM ME!

SO THE HARDER YOU TRY TO DESTROY ME, THE MORE POWER YOU LOSE?
WELL THEN COME ON, LEX! IS THAT ALL YOU'VE GOT?
HOW HARD CAN IT BE TO KILL CLARK KENT?
STOP TRYING TO
--PROVOKE ME!

FIGHT.
--me!
I'm YOUR EQUAL!
I mean-- YOUR SUPERIOR!
FIGHT me, DAMN YOU!

EVEN IF I AM GOING TO LOSE THIS POWER--
IF I CAN USE THE LAST OF IT TO DESTROY YOU--!
--IT WILL ALL HAVE BEEN WORTH IT!
AHH!
WHEN...WILL YOU GET IT, LUTHOR?
THIS APPROACH OF YOURS, THE WAY YOU DO THINGS, IT'LL NEVER WORK. ITS EMPTINESS MAKES EVEN YOUR SUCCESSES WORTHLESS.
YOU HAD THE CHANCE TO BE KIND, TO HEAL YOURSELF ALONG WITH THE UNIVERSE. TO FIND YOUR OWN MA AND PA KENT.
BUT YOU DIDN'T HAVE THE COURAGE TO CHANGE.
GAHHHHH!

HEY, CYBORG! HERE'S AN IDEA! MAYBE WE'D BE CRUSHED BY THE ANGSTY ENORMOUS HOPELESSNESS OF EVERYTHING--
--IF YOU ACTUALLY SHOWED US WHAT YOU FOUND?!
THAT'S WHERE I'M LEADING YOU.
I BELIEVE WHAT I'M ABOUT TO SHOW YOU--
--WILL MAKE OUR SITUATION CLEAR.

NO!
AHH!
THE POWER, IT'S
-GONE

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
I HAD...I CAN'T REMEMBER!
CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT I HAD
MUSTN'T LET MYSELF REMEMBER
DID I...LOSE SOMETHING?
WHERE AM I?
PLEASE.. WHO AM I?
"HAHAHAHAHA!"
IN ARKHAM ASYLUM...
OH, THAT IS MY IDEA OF BLISS!
I TOLD HIM TO MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE--
--AND HE DID!
LUTHOR PLAYED THE GREATEST EVER SICK JOKE ON THE UNIVERSE--
--AND ON HIMSELF!
HAHAHAHAHA!

THAT DIDN'T LAST.
NOT THAT I EXPECTED IT TO
OH WELL, NO REST FOR THE ENDLESS. OKAY, SO...HI!
HA HA HA HA HA!
AHH! AHH!
YOUR LITTLE ACOLYTES..
STILL... DANGER...
DANGER... WHAT--?
...TRAPPED
THE RUINS OF YOUR WORLD
MY--? OF COURSE! YOU WERE BEHIND DOOMSDAY'S ATTACKS.
BAIT. HA. SO SMALL NOW.
SO UNHAPPY.
I HAD IT ALL
LEX, BEHIND YOU--
I HAD IT A--
LUTHOR!
VVOOSH
LUTHOR

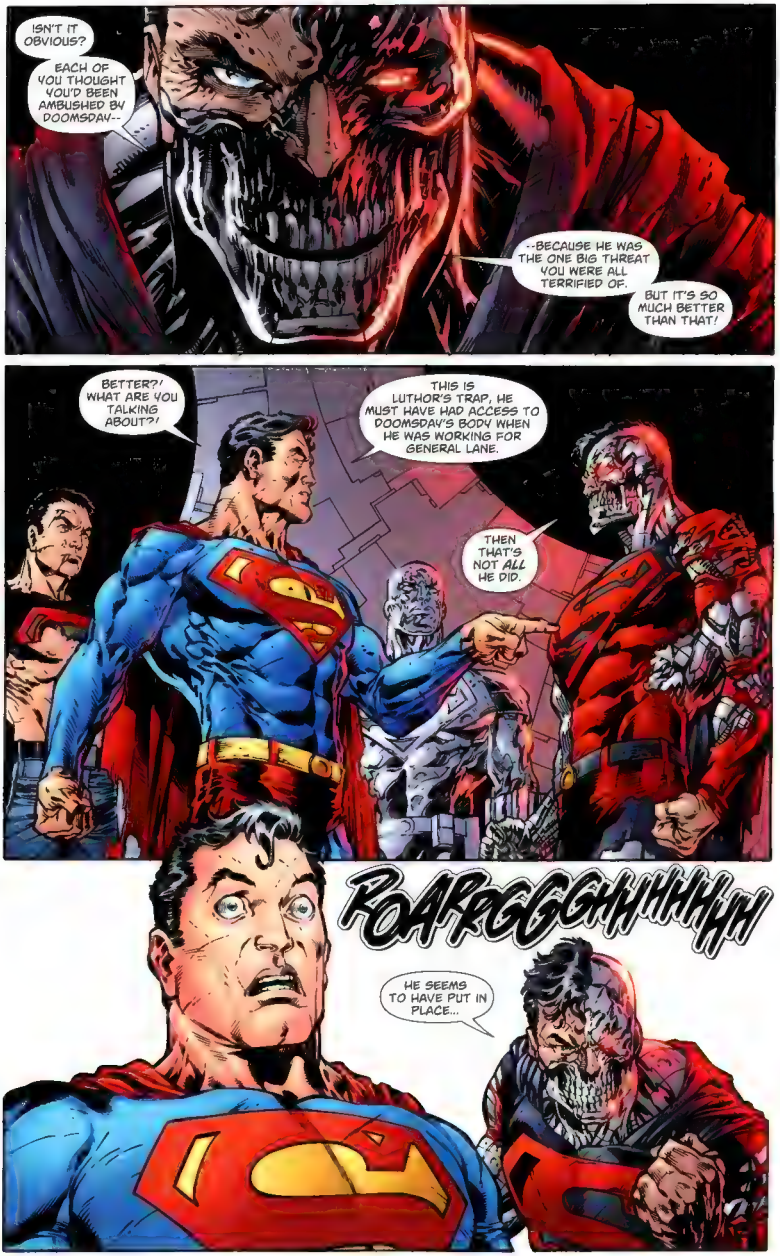
THE RUINS OF MY WORLD?!
HE MUST HAVE MEANT THE DEBRIS OF NEW KRYPTON.
WHOEVER YOU ARE, I'M HEADING FOR EARTH'S SOLAR SYSTEM. I'M TAKING LUTHOR'S SPACECRAFT, BEFORE THIS AIR RUNS OUT.
DO YOU WANT--?
NO
LEX JUST... DISCARDED ME, DESPITE EVERYTHING.
BUT JEEZ, I'M FINALLY FREE.
I WANT TO MAKE MY OWN WAY. WITH MY OWN FACE
AND I KNOW WHERE I WANT TO BE.
AND, UNSEEN BY ANYONE--
--A REMNANT OF SOMETHING, IN A UNIVERSE NEW TO IT, ALSO SEEKS ITS WAY
A REMNANT THAT MAY ONE DAY GROW...

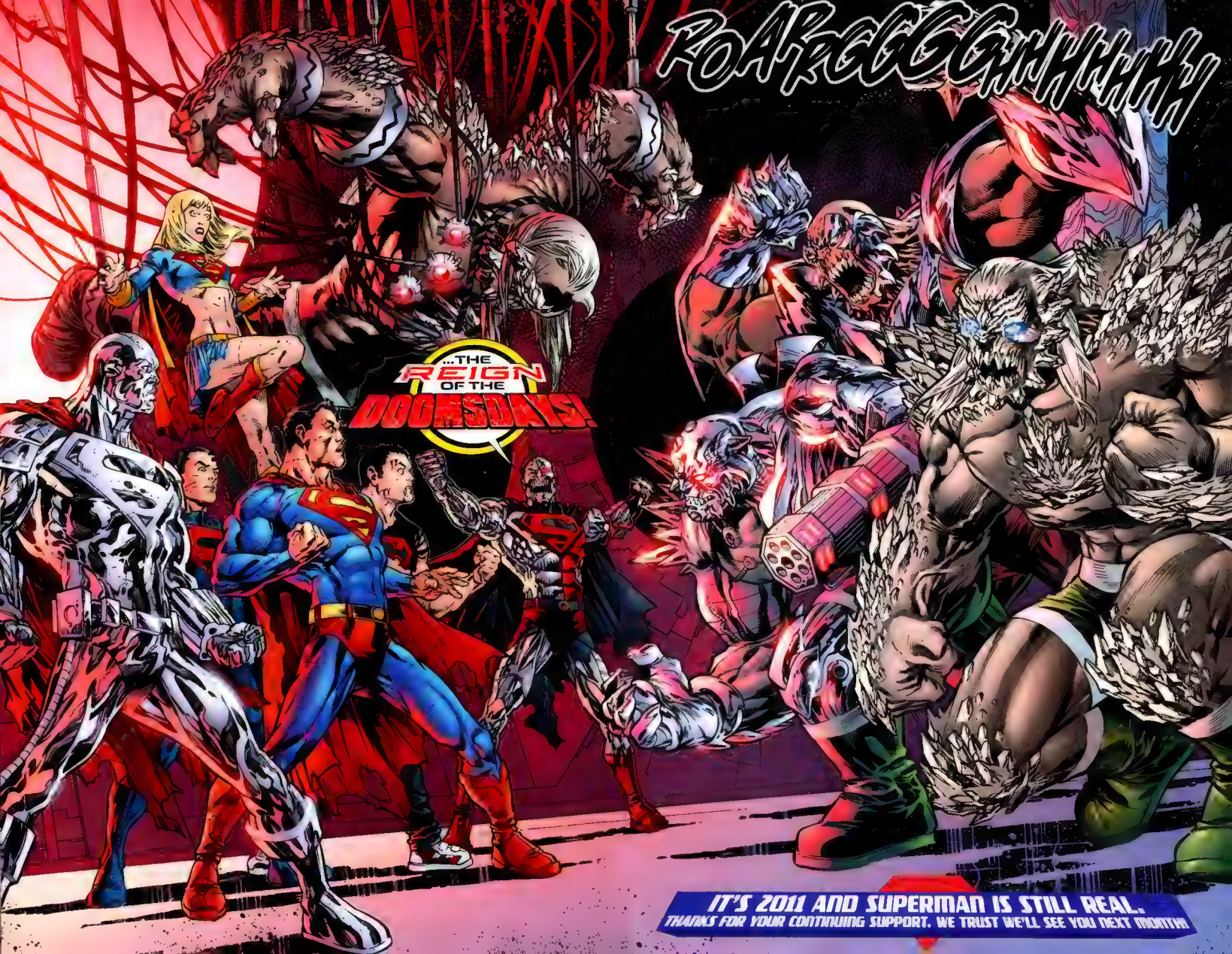
LATER, IN EARTH'S SOLAR SYSTEM, ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE SUN--
LUTHOR MEANT FOR ME TO FIND THIS.
A TRAP FOR MY FRIENDS. AND HE DIDN'T FREE THEM EVEN WHEN HE HAD INFINITE POWER. EVEN WHEN HE THOUGHT HE'D WON.
THERE!
THOSE ARE STEEL'S NANOBYTES, THE ONES HE WAS WORKING ON TO COUNTER DOOMSDAY. HE MUST HAVE DELIBERATELY TAGGED DOOMSDAY WITH THEM DURING THEIR FIGHT!
THEY SHOULD LEAD ME TO --
--Hmm.' I'VE JUST PASSED THROUGH A CLOAKING ZONE...

THERE'S AN EVENT HORIZON INSIDE. A PRIVATE UNIVERSE.
LUTHOR WAS BETTING ON ME FOLLOWING THEM, TRAPPING MYSELF IN THERE.
SO I HAVE TO MAKE A LEAP OF FAITH. TO SIMPLY GAMBLE THAT I'LL DISCOVER SOMETHING LUTHOR DOESN'T KNOW.
I'LL TAKE THAT BET!

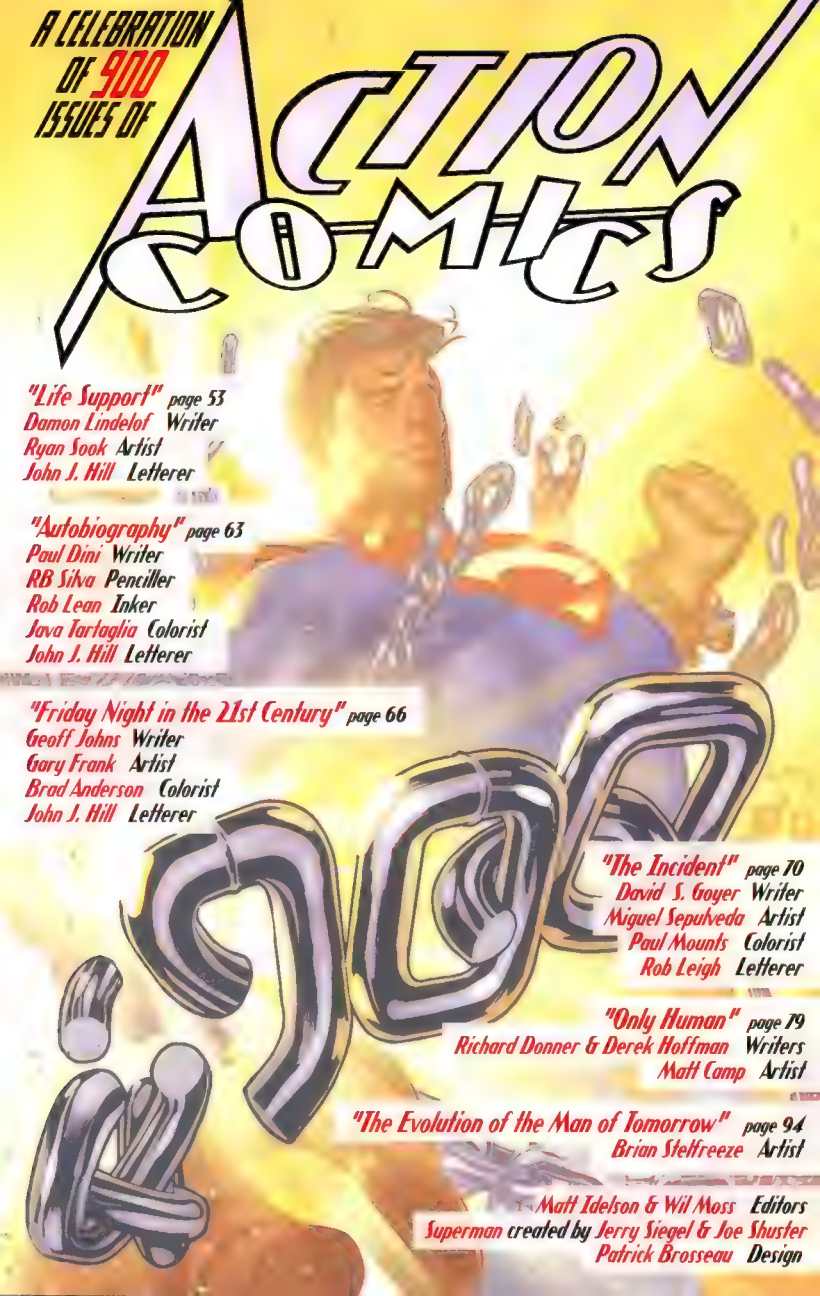
AHH!
HOW... HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE?
WHAT IS THIS? WHAT'S GOING ON?
KAL?!
YOU FOUND US!
AND YOU HAVE A WAY OUT?! TELL ME!
I DON'T KNOW, JOHN. BUT NOW, TELL ME, WHAT--?
YOU MIGHT WELL ASK, SUPERMAN.
THIS IS WHAT I BROUGHT THEM HERE TO SEE

DOOMSDAY AGAIN!
BUT WE WERE FIGHTING HIM JUST TWO MINUTES AGO! HOW DID HE GET LIKE THIS?


ISN'T IT OBVIOUS?
EACH OF YOU THOUGHT YOU'D BEEN AMBUSHED BY DOOMSDAY--
--BECAUSE HE WAS THE ONE BIG THREAT YOU WERE ALL TERRIFIED OF.
BUT IT'S SO MUCH BETTER THAN THAT!
BETTER?! WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!
THIS IS LUTHOR'S TRAP, HE MUST HAVE HAD ACCESS TO DOOMSDAY'S BODY WHEN HE WAS WORKING FOR GENERAL LANE.
THEN THAT'S NOT ALL HE DID.
ROARGGGHHHHHH
HE SEEMS TO HAVE PUT IN PLACE...


ROARGGGGHHHHHH
...THE REIGN OF THE DOOMSDAYS!
IT'S 2011 AND SUPERMAN IS STILL REAL.
THANKS FOR YOUR CONTINUING SUPPORT. WE TRUST WE'LL SEE YOU NEXT MONTH!

A CELEBRATION OF 900 ISSUES OF ACTION COMICS



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Ryan Sook Artist
John J. Hill Letterer

"Autobiography" page 63
Paul Dini Writer
RB Silva Penciller
Rob Lean Inker
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Matt Idelson & Wil Moss Editors
Superman created by Jerry Siegel & Joe Shuster
Patrick Brosseau Design

"THANK YOU FOR COMING TO SEE ME ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE."

HAVE A SEAT.
THANK YOU.
YOU WERE VERY HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.
MEN I RESPECT A GREAT DEAL SEEM TO THINK YOU'RE BRILLIANT.
WELL, THAT'S VERY FLATTERING, SIR.
IS IT TRUE?
...EXCUSE ME?
ARE YOU BRILLIANT?
AT... WHAT?
AT ANYTHING.
TOP OF MY CLASS IN MOLECULAR CHEMISTRY AND BIOMETRICS, WITH AN ADVANCED DEGREE IN NANOENGINEERING.
NONE OF WHICH IMPRESSES MY WIFE.
...YOU'RE MARRIED.
YES, SIR.
I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT.

DRINK?
IT'S NINE IN THE MORNING.
I KNOW WHAT TIME IT IS.
UH... NO, SIR.
NO THANK YOU.
I AM GOING TO ASK YOU TO SOLVE A PROBLEM FOR ME.
I WILL OFFER YOU A RIDICULOUS AMOUNT OF MONEY TO DO THIS.
BUT AS WE'VE ALREADY ESTABLISHED, YOU'RE BRILLIANT.
BRILLIANT ENOUGH TO FIGURE OUT THE MONEY IS IRRELEVANT.
AND SO YOU'LL ASK ME WHY I NEED YOU TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM.
I STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT YOU RESIST THIS URGE.
...WHY?
BECAUSE YOU'LL START DRINKING AT NINE IN THE MORNING, TOO.

"THIS PROBLEM YOU WANT ME TO SOLVE..."

WHAT IS IT?
LIFE SUPPORT.
HOW MUCH AIR, WATER AND FOOD COULD YOU GET INSIDE THIS BALL?
...EXCUSE ME?

COULD YOU PACK THIS WITH EVERYTHING NECESSARY TO SUSTAIN A LIFE FOR SEVERAL YEARS?
WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE SO SMALL?
BECAUSE THE SHIP THAT WILL CONTAIN IT IS SMALL.
CAN YOU MAKE THE SHIP BIGGER?
NO.
WHY NOT?
BECAUSE IT HAS TO BE FAST.
HOW FAST?
FAST ENOUGH TO ESCAPE AN INTENSIVE GRAVITATIONAL PULL.

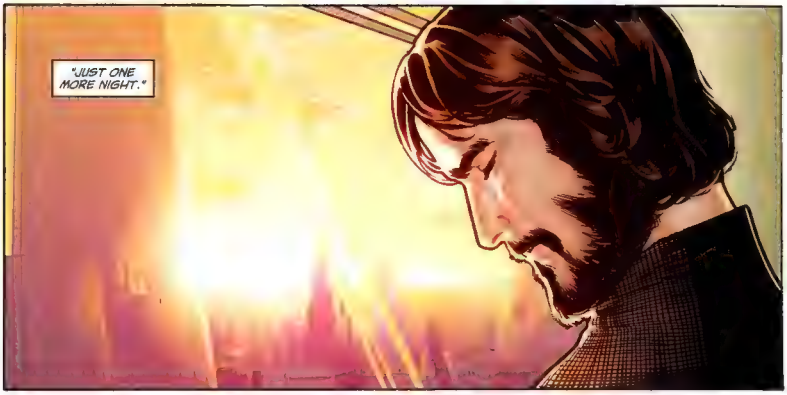
WHERE IS THIS SHIP TAKING OFF FROM?

YOU KNOW WHERE

HOW MANY CAN THE SHIP CARRY?
ONE.
JUST ONE.
AN INFANT.

IS THE WORLD GOING TO END, JOR-EL?
I'M AFRAID IT IS.
YES.
I KNOW IT IS UNFAIR OF ME TO ASK THIS OF YOU.
TO SAVE A CHILD THAT IS NOT EVEN YOUR OWN.
BUT IF YOU WON'T HELP ME, EVERYTHING THAT WE ARE...
EVERYTHING THAT WE HAVE EVER BEEN...
WILL BE GONE.

THE JOB.
HOW MUCH TIME DO I HAVE?
THREE DAYS.
YOU WOULD NEED TO START IMMEDIATELY.
NO.
NOT IMMEDIATELY
"I WANT ONE NIGHT...



LIFE SUPPORT

DAMON LINDELOF *writer* RYAN SOOK *artist*
JOHN J. HILL *letterer* WIL MOSS *editor* MATT IDELSON *group editor*
SUPERMAN *created by* JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

AUTOBIOGRAPHY
PAUL DINI
writer
RB SILVA
penciller
ROB LEAN
inker
JAVA TARTAGLIA
colorist
JOHN J. HILL
letterer
WIL MOSS
editor
MATT IDELSON
group editor
SUPERMAN created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER
IT'S LONG GONE TO DUST, BUT TWENTY MILLION YEARS AGO, THIS WAS THE WORLD I KNEW.
IT'S BEAUTIFUL.
THE I'AWA, THE DOMINANT SPECIES OF THE PLANET ONLY WISHED TO PROVIDE ME COMFORT.
IN RETURN, I QUELLED EARTHQUAKES, BROUGHT RAIN TO DESERTS, AND PERFORMED A THOUSAND OTHER SMALL ACTS A BEING OF MY SPECIES DOES WITH EASE.
OF COURSE, KAL-EL, YOU KNOW THAT WHAT IS COMMONPLACE FOR ONE SPECIES CAN BE MISTAKEN FOR A MIRACLE BY ANOTHER.
SO I'VE HEARD.
IN TIME, THERE CAME A DISASTER THAT EVEN I COULD NOT HALT - A MASSIVE SOLAR ERUPTION.
I CONSIDERED TRANSPORTING THE I'AWA TO A NEW WORLD. BUT WOULD THAT HAVE BEEN A KINDNESS?
STARTING LIFE OVER IN A TERRIFYING PLACE WHERE THEY WOULD KNOW STRUGGLE AND MISERY?

ON THAT FINAL NIGHT, I MADE SURE THE ENTIRE I'AWA RACE SLEPT BEFORE I MOVED ON. THEY NEVER SAW THE END OF THEIR WORLD
EONS PASSED. I MOVED THROUGH THE STARS AS ONE OF MY RACE DOES, TRAVELING FROM WORLD TO WORLD
MANY TIMES I WENT UNNOTICED BY THE CREATURES THAT LIVED UPON THEM
"OTHER TIMES, JUST A GLIMPSE OF MY FORM PASSING NEAR AN INHABITED PLANET WOULD BE TAKEN AS A CELESTIAL VISION FEARFUL IMAGINATIONS HAVE NAMED ME BOTH GOD AND DEVIL. THOUGH I AM NEITHER
"COUNTLESS WARS WERE FOUGHT IN MY NAME. ENTIRE SOLAR SYSTEMS DIED."
SO I CONTINUED TO DRIFT. AS THEY ULTIMATELY MUST, THE YEARS TOOK THEIR TOLL
THE REST OF MY KIND HAD DIED OUT LONG AGO, AND ONLY I REMAINED
THAT WAS WHEN YOU FOUND ME, ALMOST SPENT AND WITHOUT PURPOSE
YOU BROUGHT ME HERE, WHERE I COULD LIVE MY LAST CENTURIES IN PEACE. FOR THAT I THANK YOU
I'VE BENEFITED TOO, SARVA. YOU'VE TAUGHT ME THINGS ABOUT LIFE THROUGHOUT THE GALAXY THAT I WOULD NEVER HAVE DISCOVERED BY MYSELF.
THE WORLDS YOU'VE VISITED WILL LIVE ON IN THE HOLO-IMAGES YOU'VE RECORDED

WE ARE MUCH ALIKE, KAL-EL. WHILE IT IS NOT MY WISH, IN SOME FUTURE TIME YOU MAY FIND YOURSELF WANDERING THE STARS, A GOD ON ONE WORLD, A MICROBE ON ANOTHER.
I'VE CONSIDERED THAT. WHILE I CAN'T SAY WHAT MY DESTINY HOLDS, I WOULD HOPE SOME OF THE WONDERS I'VE EXPERIENCED WILL LIVE ON THROUGH ME, TOO.
AND I WOULD HOPE AS KINDLY A REFUGE EXISTS FOR YOU OUT THERE AS THE ONE YOU'VE PROVIDED FOR ME HERE.
KAL
WAS I WRONG NOT TO SAVE THE I'IAWA?
WE'RE ONLY HUMAN, SARVA.
END

WHEN'S THE LAST TIME YOU CLEANED YOUR DESK, LOIS?
THIS IS PERFECTLY ORGANIZED, CLARK
I HAVE A SYSTEM!
AH-HA!
A LEGION RING?
YUP.

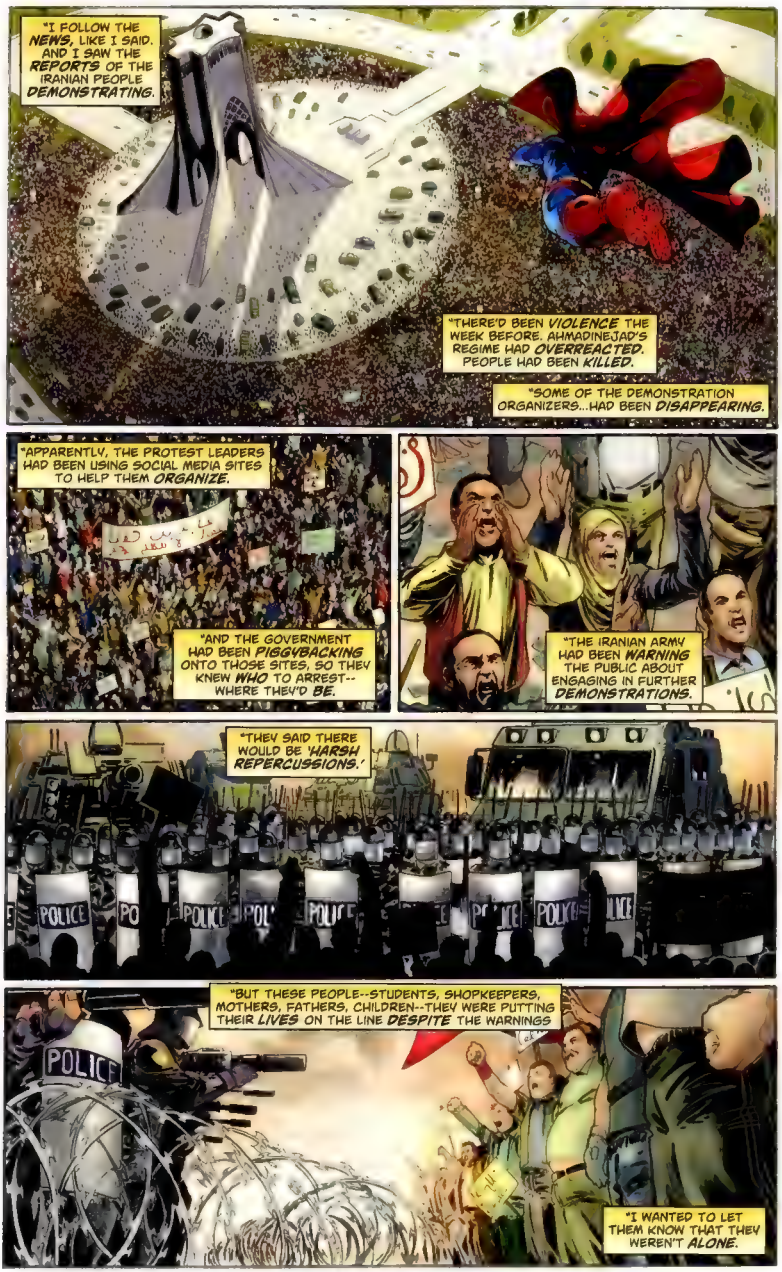
WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH A LEGION RING, LOIS?
SATURN GIRL GAVE IT TO ME IN CASE OF EMERGENCIES.
WHY WOULD YOU KEEP THAT IN YOUR DESK INSTEAD OF SOMEWHERE SAFE?
WHO'S GOING TO DARE GO DIGGING THROUGH THAT?
POINT TAKEN. SO WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO WITH IT? FLY?
NOTHING BEATS FLYING WITH YOU, CLARK.
PLEASE DON'T TELL ME YOU WANT TO TIME-TRAVEL.
NO INTEREST IN REVISITING THE PAST OR SPOILING THE FUTURE.
THEN WHAT, LOIS?
CLARK, I WAS AN ARMY BRAT. IF I HAD A FRIEND FOR MORE THAN THREE MONTHS, IT WAS A MIRACLE.
THE LEGION WERE YOUR CHILDHOOD FRIENDS FOR YEARS, BUT THE ONLY TIME YOU SEE THEM ANYMORE IS WHEN THE UNIVERSE IS ABOUT TO END.
I WANTED TO CALL YOUR FRIENDS AND INVITE THEM OVER FOR DINNER.
YOU DESERVE A NORMAL LIFE, CLARK, WHENEVER YOU CAN GET IT.
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO COOK, ARE YOU?
I WOULDN'T DARE.

FRIDAY NIGHT
in the 21st CENTURY
PIZZA

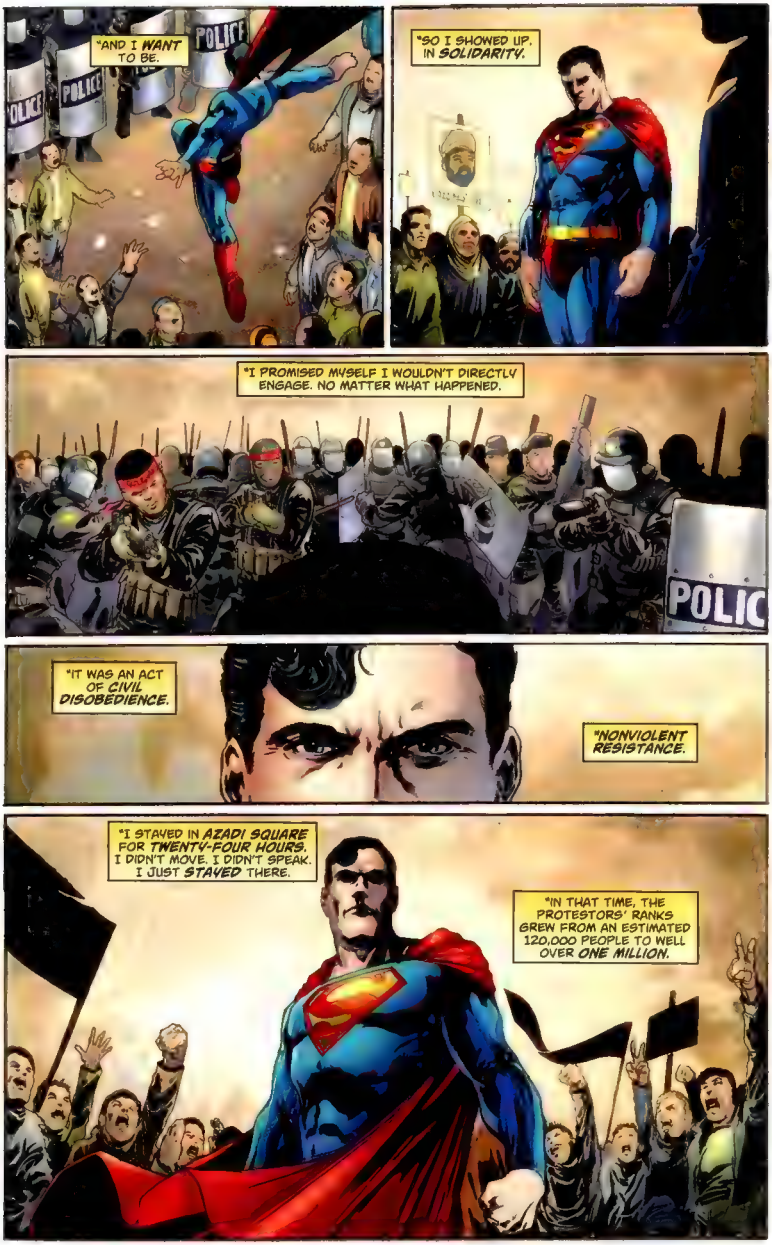
CAMP DAVID--FREDERICK, MARYLAND
DATE
DAY
HOPE YOU HAVEN'T BEEN WAITING OUT HERE LONG.
THE INCIDENT
DAVID S. GOYER - WRITER
MIGUEL SEPULVEDA - ARTIST
PAUL MOUNTS - COLORIST
ROB LEIGH - LETTERER
[illegible] - EDITOR
[illegible] - SENIOR EDITOR, MATT IDELSON - EDITOR
[illegible] - SENIOR EDITOR, JENNIFER GRÜNWALD - SENIOR EDITOR, JEANNIE STEELE & JOE SHUSTER

THANK YOU FOR COMING. MY NAME IS--
GABRIEL WRIGHT, THE PRESIDENT'S NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR.
THEN YOU'RE AWARE OF THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION.
I UNDERSTAND WHY THE PRESIDENT IS CONCERNED, OBVIOUSLY.
BUT AS FOR SOME OF THE SPECIFICS--WELL, I GUESS I TAKE ISSUE WITH HOW THINGS HAVE BEEN CHARACTERIZED IN THE MEDIA.
MAYBE YOU COULD SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT FOR US, THEN.
WHY DID YOU DO IT? WHAT IN GOD'S NAME WERE YOU THINKING?
THOSE MARINE SNIPERS YOU'VE GOT STATIONED UP ON THAT RIDGE ABOUT TWO HUNDRED YARDS TO THE NORTH--

"--THEIR WINTER CAMO DOESN'T DO MUCH TO HIDE THEM, SINCE I CAN SEE INTO THE U.V. AND INFRARED SPECTRUMS.
"THAT HIGH VELOCITY ROUND IN YOUR PRIMARY SNIPER'S RIFLE IS KRYPTONITE, RIGHT? YOU EXPECTING ME TO GIVE YOU TROUBLE?"
BOTTOM LINE? WE DON'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK.
WE'RE HOPING YOU HAVEN'T GONE ROGUE. WE'RE HOPING YOU CAN PUT OUR MINDS AT EASE.
SO I'M GOING TO ASK YOU ONE MORE TIME:
WHAT, IN GOD'S NAME, DID YOU THINK YOU WERE DOING FLYING INTO TEHRAN?


"I FOLLOW THE NEWS, LIKE I SAID. AND I SAW THE REPORTS OF THE IRANIAN PEOPLE DEMONSTRATING.
"THERE'D BEEN VIOLENCE THE WEEK BEFORE. AHMADINEJAD'S REGIME HAD OVERREACTED. PEOPLE HAD BEEN KILLED.
"SOME OF THE DEMONSTRATION ORGANIZERS...HAD BEEN DISAPPEARING.
"APPARENTLY, THE PROTEST LEADERS HAD BEEN USING SOCIAL MEDIA SITES TO HELP THEM ORGANIZE.
"AND THE GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN PIGGYBACKING ONTO THOSE SITES, SO THEY KNEW WHO TO ARREST--WHERE THEY'D BE.
"THE IRANIAN ARMY HAD BEEN WARNING THE PUBLIC ABOUT ENGAGING IN FURTHER DEMONSTRATIONS.
"THEY SAID THERE WOULD BE 'HARSH REPERCUSSIONS.'
POLICE
"BUT THESE PEOPLE--STUDENTS, SHOPKEEPERS, MOTHERS, FATHERS, CHILDREN--THEY WERE PUTTING THEIR LIVES ON THE LINE DESPITE THE WARNINGS
"I WANTED TO LET THEM KNOW THAT THEY WEREN'T ALONE.

"AS A SUPER-HERO, AS METROPOLIS' PROTECTOR, I'VE FOUGHT JUST ABOUT EVERY THREAT IMAGINABLE: ALIEN INVADERS--
"TIME-TRAVELING DESPOTS--
"ROGUES WITH EVERY KIND OF COSTUME AND GIMMICK YOU CAN THINK OF.
"I'M GOOD WHEN IT COMES TO FIGHTING APOCALYPTIC THREATS.
"BUT THE EVERYDAY DEGRADATIONS THAT HUMANS SUFFER?
"DYING OF THIRST? HUNGER? PEOPLE BEING DENIED THEIR BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS?
"I'VE NEVER BEEN VERY EFFECTIVE AT STOPPING THINGS LIKE THAT.


"AND I WANT TO BE.
POLICE
"SO I SHOWED UP, IN SOLIDARITY.
"I PROMISED MYSELF I WOULDN'T DIRECTLY ENGAGE. NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENED.
POLIC
"IT WAS AN ACT OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE.
"NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE.
"I STAYED IN AZADI SQUARE FOR TWENTY-FOUR HOURS. I DIDN'T MOVE. I DIDN'T SPEAK. I JUST STAYED THERE.
"IN THAT TIME, THE PROTESTORS' RANKS GREW FROM AN ESTIMATED 120,000 PEOPLE TO WELL OVER ONE MILLION.

"SOME OF THE PEOPLE THREW ROSES AT MY FEET.
"OTHERS THREW GREEN SASHES AND FLAGS. THE COLOR OF THEIR PROTEST.
"COUNTER-DEMONSTRATORS THREW MOLOTOV COCKTAILS AT ME
"BUT THE ARMY OF THE GUARDIAN OF THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTION NEVER FIRED A SHOT.
"THE DEMONSTRATION BEGAN AND ENDED PEACEFULLY.
"THEN, AFTER TWENTY-FOUR HOURS, I LEFT."
"BUT DID IT DO ANY GOOD?
"DID THE REGIME PROMISE TO START INSTITUTING DEMOCRATIC REFORMS?"

NO.
SO WHAT PURPOSE DID YOUR SHOWBOATING SERVE?
YOUR ACTIONS HAVE CREATED AN INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT. THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT IS ACCUSING YOU OF ACTING ON THE PRESIDENT'S BEHALF. THEY'RE CALLING YOUR INTERFERENCE AN ACT OF WAR.
I REALIZE THAT. AND YOU'RE RIGHT, OF COURSE. IT WAS FOOLISH OF ME--
--WHICH IS WHY I INTEND TO SPEAK BEFORE THE UNITED NATIONS TOMORROW AND INFORM THEM THAT I AM RENOUNCING MY U.S. CITIZENSHIP.
WHAT?
I'M TIRED OF HAVING MY ACTIONS CONSTRUED AS INSTRUMENTS OF U.S. POLICY.
"TRUTH, JUSTICE, AND THE AMERICAN WAY"-- IT'S NOT ENOUGH ANYMORE.
THE WORLD'S TOO SMALL. TOO CONNECTED.
"WHEN I LOOK AT YOU, I SEE YOU IN EVERY SPECTRUM. I CAN SEE THE MICROSCOPIC DEMODEX MITES THAT LIVE IN YOUR EYELASHES...
"THE PRE-CANCEROUS MOLE ON YOUR LEFT CHEEK THAT YOU PROBABLY THINK IS JUST A MOLE...
"THE HALO OF ELECTROMAGNETIC RADIATION LEAKING FROM YOUR SMART-PHONE..."

I'M AN ALIEN, MR. WRIGHT. BORN ON ANOTHER WORLD. I CAN'T HELP BUT SEE THE BIGGER PICTURE.
I'VE BEEN THINKING TOO SMALL. I REALIZE THAT NOW.
YOU ASKED ME IF MY SHOWBOATING WAS WORTH IT. IF IT EFFECTED ANY MEANINGFUL CHANGE.
MAYBE NOT ON THE MACRO SCALE. BUT AS I WAS FLYING AWAY--?
"I LOOKED DOWN AND SAW SOMETHING
POLICE
POLICE
POLICE
"TWO MEN. A MEMBER OF THE ARMY OF THE GUARDIAN OF THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTION AND A PROTESTOR. THE PROTESTOR WAS EXTENDING A ROSE TO THE SOLDIER.
"I THOUGHT THE SOLDIER WAS GOING TO FIRE--
"--BUT THEN HE DID SOMETHING UNEXPECTED AND INCREDIBLY BRAVE."
END

ACTION COMICS #900

"Only Human"

Screenplay by
Richard Donner
&
Derek Hoffman

Storyboards by
Matt Camp

Superman created by
Jerry Siegel
&
Joe Shuster

INT. DAILY PLANET -(CLARK CU)

We see the familiar appearance of Clarke Kent, [illegible] as he [illegible] and [illegible] his glasses.

INT. DAILY PLANET -(CONTINUED)

We see LOIS LANE, the world's most tenacious reporter. We are used to seeing her standing up to crooked politicians and super villains, but here she sits ON her desk, cross-legged, interviewing CLIFF CARTER.

Cliff is the former Metropolis Comets star running back and Monarchs center fielder. Think if Tom Brady and Bo Jackson were the same person. The normal cacophony of the newsroom has ground to a halt. Everyone is mesmerized by the scene of these two, talking to each other like there's no one else in the room.

LOIS LANE
But Cliff, as the new spokesperson for SuperTech, how do you respond to the allegations the company is a front for Intergang?

CLIFF CARTER
Miss Lane, when I was a pro athlete, I learned that the better you were, the more they try to bring you down. Now I know the many rumors and lies that the media, present company excluded, likes to spread about SuperTech, but that's all they are: rumors and lies.

Lois presses Cliff, who turns on his megawatt smile.

LOIS LANE
Please, call me Lois. So you really aren't selling technology that Intergang stole from S.T.A.R. Labs and modified--

CLIFF CARTER
I assure you, Lois--

We took the amazing advances made by the likes of Tesla and Edison and simply took them to the next level.

LOIS LANE
And these suits are designed to give average people special powers?

CLIFF CARTER
Not special powers per se, but to enhance what we have. Of course, some of us have a little more to start with than others.

Lois and Cliff share a laugh. Clark is not amused.

CLARK KENT
Excuse me for interrupting, Lois, but I don't think we can overlook the danger this could pose.

Cliff and Lois look at Clark. They turn against him.

LOIS LANE
Why not, Clark? We seem to be okay with anyone having these powers as long as they have a costume.

CLIFF CARTER
You look around and see metahumans flying through the air, picking up cars, Clark. It's only human to think, "Why not me?"

Cliff is now grandstanding. He is in the center of the room and preaching to the crowd. Full sales pitch. Clark is the only person in the room not enraptured.

CLIFF CARTER

The air around us is filled with energy. We have found a way to draw on that energy and harness that energy, and we can honestly say that it's a new day in the era of man. For a very small price, you too can be a Superman. You too can know the freedom that comes with all of this power. You can be the man of your dreams. And let's face it, Lois, isn't it worth a little money to fulfill your fantasies?

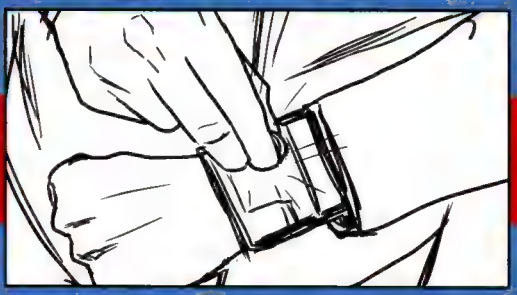
Lois rise to Cliff's illusions.

LOIS LANE

Well, I'm not sure how my husband would feel about that, Cliff, but that sure would make Superman's job easier.

CLIFF CARTER

I worry. You know as well as I. But sometimes you just need an opportunity to reach your true potential. Just think of the possibilities.

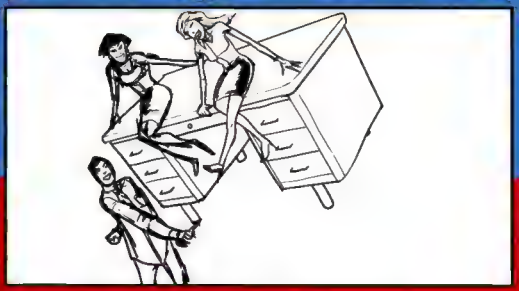


Cliff turns up a dial on his wrist and all of the electronics in the room dim.

He looks from one side of the room to the other.

CLIFF CARTER

With the EX9000 I have a 2.3 40-yard dash. Now I'd lost that in college.



Cliff lifts up a desk with two women sitting on it.

CLIFF CARTER
I'm eight times stronger than I was in my best years with the Monarchs. I would have hit more than 78 home runs, I bet!

With the entire room now staring slack-jawed at him, Cliff literally floats his way back to Lois.

CLIFF CARTER
And come on now Miss Lane, I am one of this country's most celebrated athletes of all time. But I was bound. Limited. With the EX9000 SuperSuit, I can fly.

We are over Cliff's shoulder now, seeing Lois mid frame and Clark and Jimmy in the BG. Lois is dumbstruck, but Clark looks like we've never really seen before. Annoyed?

JIMMY OLSEN
Wow. What a a swell suit.

CLIFF CARTER
Swell, Jimmy?...

Cliff, replicating the now ubiquitous pose, opens his shirt and puffs out his chest to reveal the EX9000 under his shirt.

(Note: This is cheesy, and Cliff is playing it to the max. Full smile, Hollywood good looks. It's like Will Smith getting the chance to play Superman.)

CLIFF CARTER
You mean Super!

(ARTIST NOTE- He will have a helmet when he flies that has a windshield so we can see his face. There should be a small receiver on the back, either mid-back or maybe on the belt, and a control panel on the wrist.)

The whole room is standing and applauding, even Lois. Clark can't believe they are falling for this act.

CLARK KENT
Oh come now, Lois. This isn't the first time someone has tried to artificially wield power beyond their reach, and how does it usually end up?

LOIS LANE
And how many times has it worked out, Clark? For every one of those disasters, we've been given a Batman, a Green Lantern, a Wonder Woman. A Superman.

Cliff sees he's won Lois over, now he has to shut Clark up. And as a matter of fact, he likes the challenge.

CLIFF CARTER
Mr. Kent, you underestimate me. And you underestimate the people of Metropolis. All of these years we've relied on someone else to do things for us, someone else to be our hero. No more. From now on, we can have the power.

Cliff has now stripped out of his business suit and is now fully in the EX9000, an imposing figure. Lois is still mid frame, but we can see Clark is now standing.

CLIFF CARTER
From now on, when someone says "LOOK, UP IN THE SKY!" it will be because someone is using a SuperTech EX9000.

Clark can no longer contain himself.

CLARK KENT
I'm not so sure Superman is so easily replaced, Cliff.

Cliff gathers his composure. This is an opportunity. He can use this. And he knows how to get the room behind him.

CLIFF CARTER
Oh, yeah? Well, let's show Miss Lane here who the real champion is in Metropolis. Why don't I challenge Superman to a contest. Let's see what the EX9000 can do. Surely there's no harm in that.

LOIS LANE
I don't think that's going to happen.

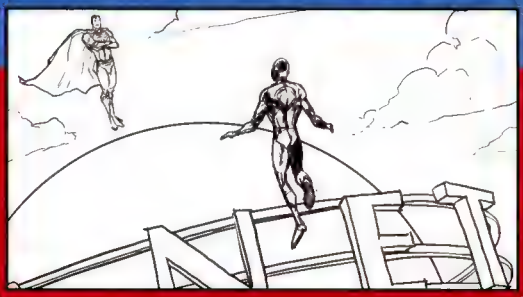
Cliff leans into Lois. His eyes twinkle and his teeth gleam. Her eyes are wide and her lips struggle to contain a smile.

CLIFF CARTER
C'mon, Lois. It's perfectly harmless. Or are you worried what happens when I beat him?

LOIS LANE
Well, I doubt that will happen, because Superman will never do it.

Seeing low angle looking up between Cliff and Lois, Clark is standing in front of his desk.

CLARK KENT
I think he might.



EXT. DAILY PLANET - EVENING

Superman floats above the Daily Planet Globe. Cliff enters from the bottom of the frame.

CLIFF CARTER
Hey, Big Blue. Thanks for coming.

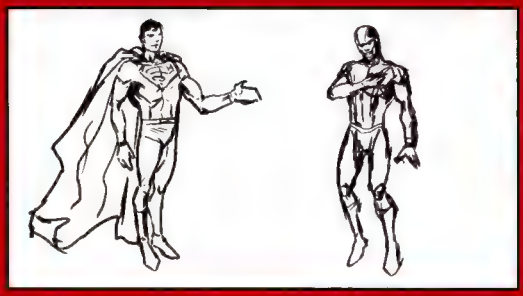
SUPERMAN
Not at all, Cliff. Clark seems to think I can be of some assistance.

CLIFF CARTER
Remember that charity gig we did when you played the Monarchs in 9?

CU on Superman. A hint of a satisfied smile on his face.

SUPERMAN
I won in the third inning, right? What's that called?

CLIFF CARTER
Mercy rule. And yeah, that's the one. How about a rematch?



SUPERMAN
What's the deal with the suit?

CLIFF CARTER
It's a nano-fiber exoskeleton, but it's all about the engine. Found a way to collect ambient electricity floating around the radiosphere.

SUPERMAN
Clark mentioned you were selling it?

CLIFF CARTER
Not selling it yet, we're still in the testing phase. This here's the prototype.

SUPERMAN
That's powerful technology to put in the hands of just anybody.

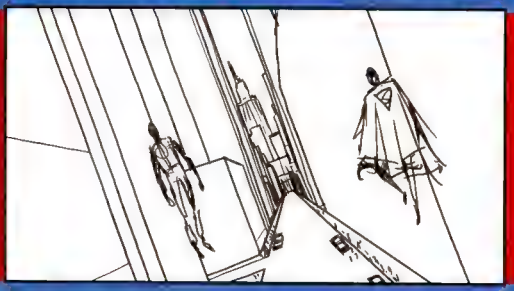
CLIFF CARTER
Sounds like you're scared to me. Don't want little Miss Lois Lane to see you become irrelevant?

[illegible]

SUPERMAN
And what if I win?

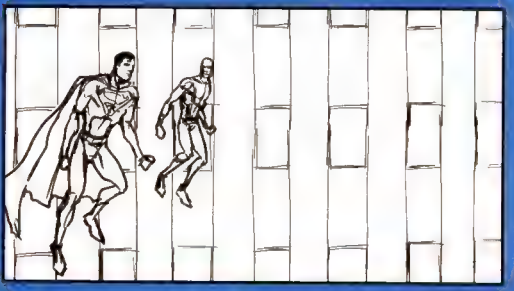
[illegible]

CLIFF CARTER
Hey, look at all the people down there, waiting for us. Let's give 'em a little show. Wouldn't want to disappoint your fans.



P.O.V. METROPOLIS STREET- SUPERMAN'S P.O.V. - EVENING
Superman sees the crowds that have gathered along the street.

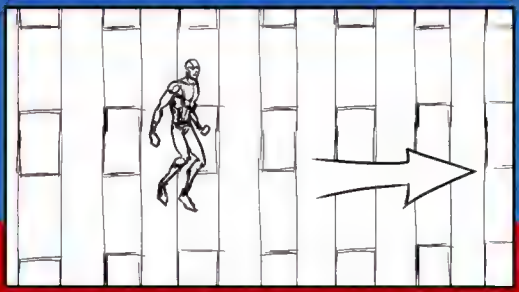
SUPERMAN
All right. One lap around the city. First one back here to touch the globe wins?



EXT. METROPOLIS SKY - EVENING

[illegible]

CLIFF CARTER
You got it, but take it easy on me. I wanna look good for Lois.

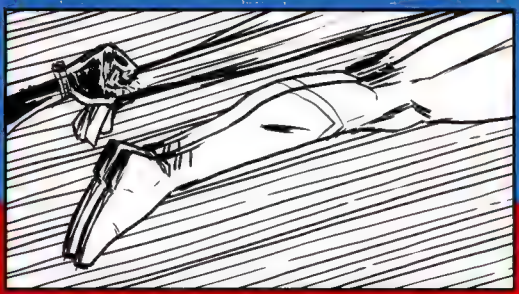


Superman looks off-frame, he can even get the words out of his mouth.

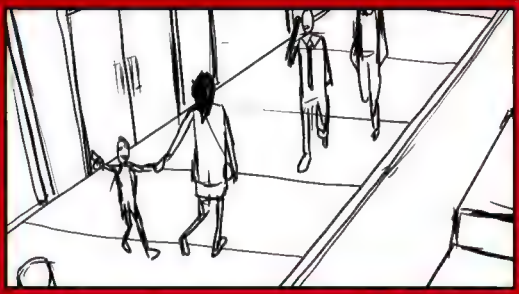
CLIFF CARTER
Oh it's on!

EXT. METROPOLIS - ABOVE UNION STATION - EVENING

We see Superman flying at the camera, Cliff a little way behind him. Cliff is still smiling, but it's an intense-looking smile.



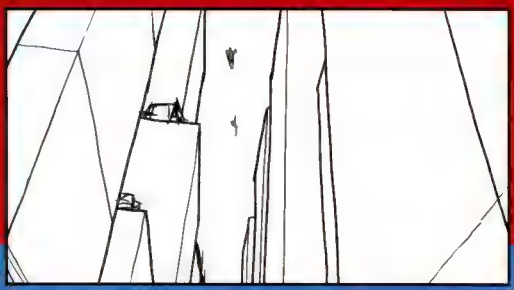
Cliff reaches up, to Superman, and does the one thing we all know you shouldn't: he tugs on Superman's cape!



EXT. METROPOLIS STREET CORNER - EVENING

A young boy is being pulled by his mother, but he is dragging, looking back over his shoulder in awe.

LITTLE BOY
Look! Up in the sky!

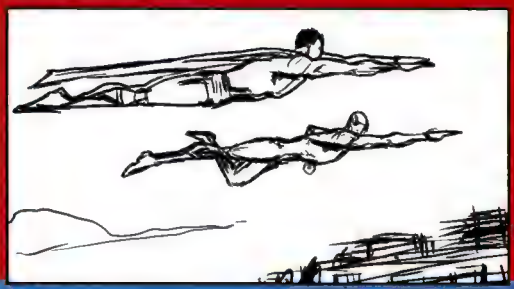


P.O.V. METROPOLIS SKY - EVENING

A POV of the little boy. Maybe the tops of a couple of skyscrapers. Cliff is in classic flight pose, almost a variation of the Heisman trophy. But swooping down into frame, leaving a blur of red behind him, is Superman.

EXT. METROPOLIS SKY - EVENING

Cliff looks over his shoulder and sees Superman gaining on him. He smirks to himself, turns up the power to the red line on his suit, and dives down towards "The Rat Wheel," an elevated train tracks.



P.O.V. SUPERMAN - EVENING

Superman can see now a faint glow, or visual hum, around Cliff. He catches up to Cliff.

SUPERMAN
Hey, what's the fastest you've flown that thing?

CLIFF CARTER
Fast enough, Blue.

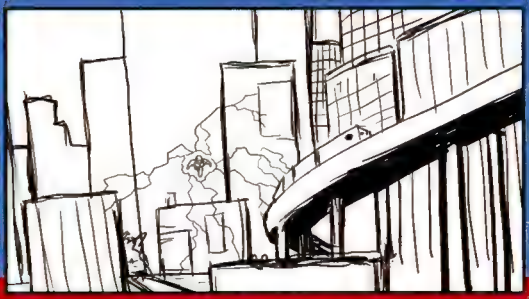
Superman just smiles

EXT. METROPOLIS SKY - CENTENNIAL PARK - EVENING

Superman blows past Cliff, just over the heads of the crowd lining the street that goes through Centennial Park. They are halfway home.

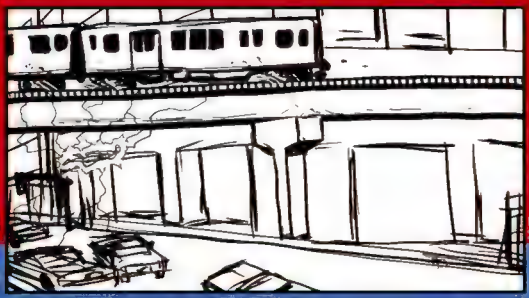
Cliff hits the park and speeds to the ground. He turns the power up way past the red line and guns home speed.

CLIFF CARTER
Do big or go home, I guess.



EXT. METROPOLIS SKY
- EVENING

Cliff emerges from the park and approaches a busy intersection, the Rail Whale reappearing and a mini Times Square of electronic billboards. The suit now has too much energy to draw from as the barely visible hum around him intensifies and he is shot forward.



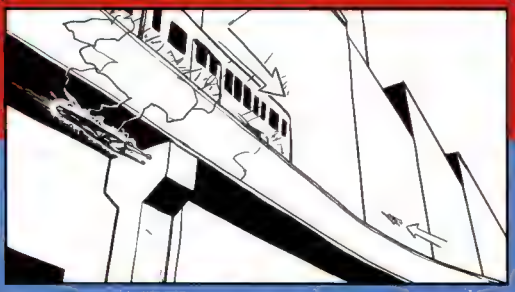
Billboards dim, the train's automatic track begins to short out and cars smash into each other as the traffic lights go out.

Superman hears the commotion and turns back to see what's going on.

EXT. METROPOLIS SKY
- EVENING

Superman is far ahead, but sees Cliff's suit sparking. The suit is leeching power from everywhere, and the whole block is dark, including the train. The spark from its wheels show us the electrical circuitry that so famously runs Metropolis trains is not helping, and the train rockets toward a turn.

SUPERMAN
Cliff! The train!



Superman takes off toward Cliff and the train. Cliff is closer to the train, but doesn't move to help. Superman is closing fast, but maybe he was just a bit too far ahead.

[illegible]

CLIFF CARTER
[illegible]

SUPERMAN
[illegible]

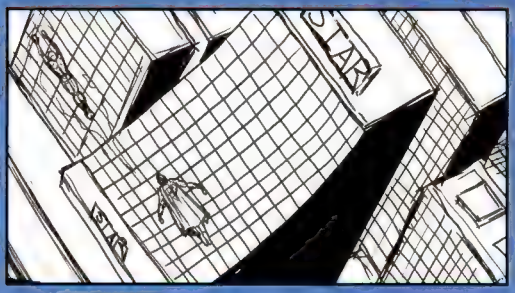
But Cliff has already taken off and is out of earshot.

EXT. METROPOLIS SKY - S.T.A.R. LABS - EVENING

Superman is chasing Cliff. We see the lights of the high-tech S.T.A.R. LABS FACILITY in the distance.

CLIFF CARTER
Hey Blue! Keep up!

The energy field around Cliff blossoms as he siphons the energy from the lab. A sonic boom accompanies an insane boost of speed as he heads up the shore.



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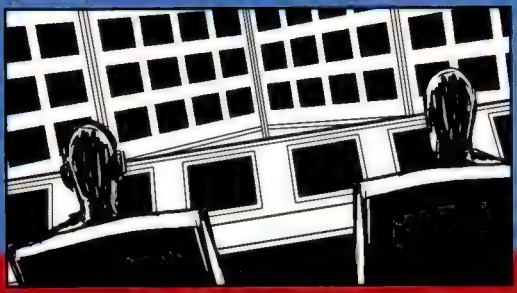


INT. STRYKER'S ISLAND PRISON - EVENING

A PRISON GUARD watches a bank of monitors that are flickering out. Another GUARD looks up in alarm.

PRISON GUARD 1
What the blazes?

PRISON GUARD 2
Power shutting down on the whole island! Sound the alarm!

EXT. METROPOLIS SKY-STRYKER'S ISLAND - EVENING

The searchlights are on all over the prison facility that houses Metropolis's most violent human offenders. Alarm horns blare as Cliff and Superman can be seen approaching in the distance.

CLIFF CARTER
Sorry. You'll have to catch me first!

SUPERMAN
Have it your way.

EXT. METROPOLIS SKY-STRYKER'S ISLAND - EVENING

Just as Cliff is sapping the power of two of the island's sentry boats, Superman goes supersonic and tackles Cliff. He carries him past the prison too fast to do any damage.

INT. STRYKER'S ISLAND PRISON - EVENING

The PRISON GUARDS are looking at the monitors, one of them is on the phone. The WARDEN rushes in.

WARDEN
What's the status?

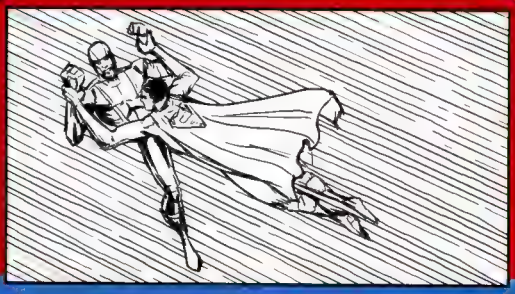
PRISON GUARD 1
I'm... I'm not sure, sir.

WARDEN
What the hell does that mean?

PRISON GUARD 2
Reports are in, sir. The power seems to be back to normal.

WARDEN
How the hell did that happen?

PRISON GUARD 1
Superman, sir. It looks like Superman saved us.



PRISON GUARD 1
Superman saved us.

EXT. METROPOLIS SKY - EVENING

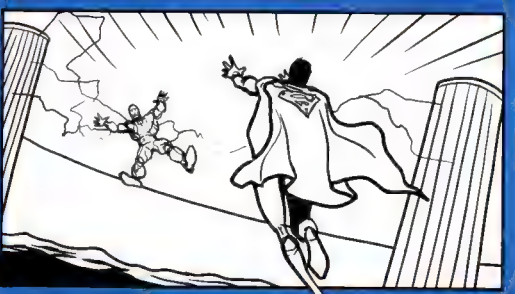
A MCU on Superman and Cliff as they struggle, streaking through the sky.

CLIFF CARTER
What are you doing, man!?

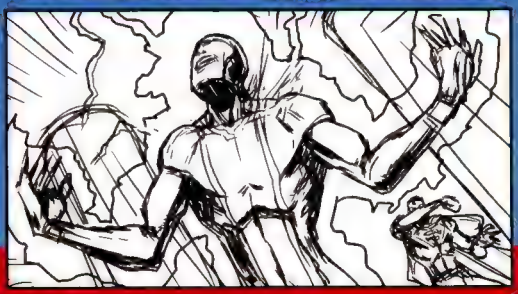
SUPERMAN
I'm shutting you down.

EXT. METROPOLIS SKY- THE S.A.I. DAM - EVENING

Superman carries Cliff out over the massive WATERFALL caused by one of Metropolis's two enormous hydroelectric dams.



SUPERMAN
I'm sorry, Cliff. This suit is just too dangerous to be in the hands of the wrong people.



CLIFF CARTER
AAAAAGGGHHHHH!!!

Cliff goes out as the suit overloads on the intense amount of power it's siphoning off the power plant at the base of the dam. The receiver and control panel both short out and explode, incapacitating Cliff.

EXT. DAILY PLANET - EVENING

Lois comes running out of a door onto the roof of The Planet. In the foreground, we see the unconscious Cliff Carter, his EX9000 still smoking. A familiar pair of red boots is just leaving the frame.

LOIS LANE
Wait! Wait! Superman!

Clark appears behind her and runs over to Cliff.

CLARK KENT
Mr. Carter. Mr. Carter, can you hear me?

LOIS LANE
Oh no, Cliff. Is he all right? What happened?

Clark nods a bit annoyed.

CLARK KENT
I think he'll be fine, but it looks like his SuperSuit wasn't all he made it out to be.

LOIS LANE
Clark! He could have been seriously hurt. Or worse.

Clark stands up, bristling just a little.

CLARK KENT
Well I guess he's lucky Superman is a good winner.

[illegible]

LOIS LANE
I was what's going on here Smallville. You don't like Clark you were annoyed the moment he walked in The Planet.

[illegible]

LOIS LANE
Oh yes you were. And now that I think about it, I don't think I've ever seen you that way before.

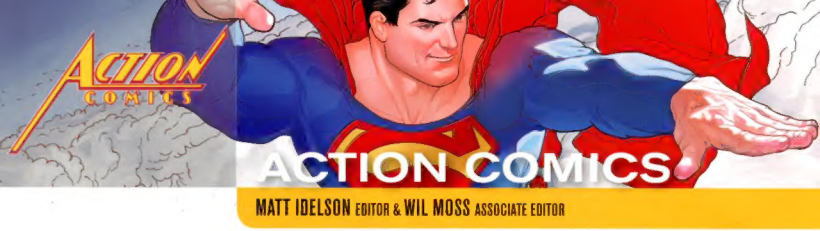
CLARK KENT
What? Annoyed? I get annoyed all the time. Why just the other day...

LOIS LANE
Not annoyed, Clark. Jealous.

Lois has a smile more powerful than Kryptonite.

CLARK KENT
Well gee, Lois. I'm only human.

THE EVOLUTION OF
THE MAN OF TOMORROW
BY BRIAN STELFREEZE



ACTION COMICS

MATT IDELSON EDITOR & **WIL MOSS** ASSOCIATE EDITOR

We're very honored and proud to bring you ACTION COMICS #900, the first superhero comic to reach such a milestone. Big thanks to Paul, Pete and Jesus for that whopper of a lead story, and of course our thanks as well to that amazing roster of guest contributors. All of us who worked on this issue owe a great deal of gratitude to the countless individuals who have worked on this title since its debut in 1938. Nine hundred issues published continuously since 1938 -- it's kind of mind-blowing to think about ...

Anyway, seeing as how this is the first issue of ACTION we've had enough room to run letters in since DC brought the letter columns back, and given that it's the conclusion of Paul Cornell and Pete Woods's epic "Black Ring" story, we thought we'd run a couple (of the many!) great letters we've received so far in support of their run! More next issue!

Dear DC,

I just wanted to thank the creative team on ACTION COMICS for the great job they have been doing.

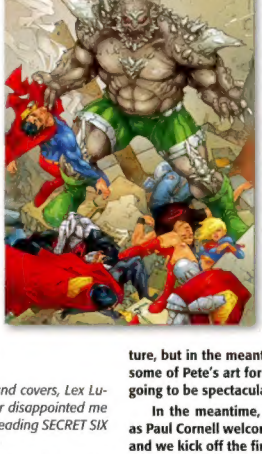
When I heard that Superman was not going to be in ACTION COMICS and that the adventures of Lex Luthor would be presented for the time being, I was surprised and expected not to continue with the series until the "big guy" returned. To my surprise and delight, I have found each and every issue better than the last.

From the excellent writing, artwork and covers, Lex Luthor's ACTION COMICS issues have never disappointed me in the least. They even introduced me to reading SECRET SIX and THE DOOM PATROL as well.

I hope once Lex's current run is over that the creative team will once in a while do a special or miniseries about Lex in the future.

Keep up the great work.

Oliver Ortiz
Brooklyn, NY



Dear Superbooks,

Everything Paul Cornell has written is a blast. I love KNIGHT & SQUIRE, but his ACTION run is where it's at; he's experimental, yet contained.

Also, I think if we look back on this Lex Luthor run, and consider how amazing Brian Azzarello's LUTHOR miniseries was, we really need to ask why this character does not get his own title. With the vilification of Wall Street and corporate big shots, Luthor is no longer just the bald guy in the green and purple battlesuit, but something even more horrifying -- real, like us, but with loads of cash.

Give us more Cornell, and more Lex Luthor!!!

Christopher Kaufman
Louisville, KY

Before we go, we wanted to bid a fond farewell to Pete Woods, who is moving on to a top-secret dynamite new DC project. Pete has been an invaluable part of the Superman line over the past several years, from "One Year Later" and SUPERMAN: WORLD OF NEW KRYPTON to "The Black Ring," a story for which he's truly delivered some of the finest work of his career. We have no doubt that Pete will be back drawing the Man of Steel sometime in the near future, but in the meantime, we've gotten a sneak peek at some of Pete's art for that next DC project – trust us, it's going to be spectacular!

In the meantime, make sure to join us next month as Paul Cornell welcomes aboard artist Kenneth Rocafort and we kick off the final act of our Doomsday story, now called "Reign of the Doomsdays"! Kenneth's art is a revelation – check out that cover for #901 in the center of this page. Superman & Co. are in for a really rough time (four Doomsdays!), but *man* is it gonna look nice!

Up, up and away to the next 900 issues!

DC COMICS EDDIE BERGANZA Executive Editor BOB HARRAS VP-Editor in Chief DIANE NELSON President DAN DIDIO and JIM LEE Co-Publishers GEOFF JOHNS Chief Creative Officer JOHN ROOD Executive VP-Sales, Marketing and Business Development AMY GENKINS Senior VP, Business and Legal Affairs NAIRI GARDINER Senior VP-Finance JEFF BOISON VP-Publishing Operations MARK CHIARELLO VP-Art Direction and Design JOHN CUNNINGHAM VP-Marketing TERRI CUNNINGHAM VP-Talent Relations and Services ALISON GILL Senior VP-Manufacturing and Operations DAVID HYDE VP-Publicity HANK KANALZ Senior VP-Digital JAY KOGAN VP-Business and Legal Affairs, Publishing JACK MAHAN VP-Business Affairs, Talent NICK NAPOLITANO VP-Manufacturing Administration RON PERAZZA VP-Online COURTNEY SIMMONS Senior VP-Publicity BOB WAYNE Senior VP, Sales

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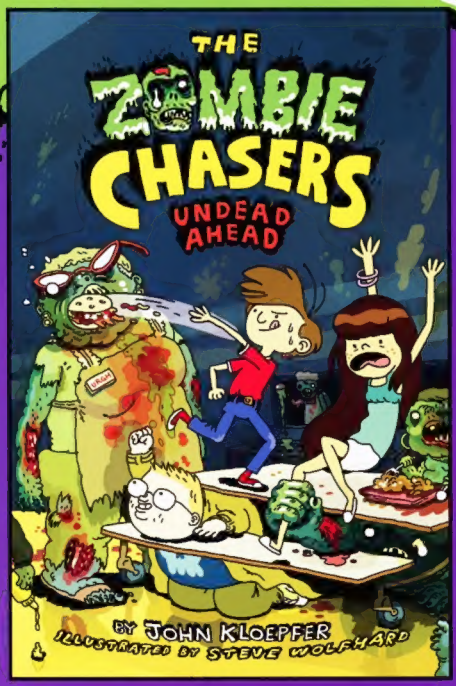
ESCAPE FROM ZOMBIEVILLE, USA!

The nightmare's not over yet! Get ready to rumble with brain-munching fiends in THE ZOMBIE CHASERS #2: UNDEAD AHEAD



Zack Clarke and his pals have discovered the zombie antidote, but can they save the nation from the undead ahead?

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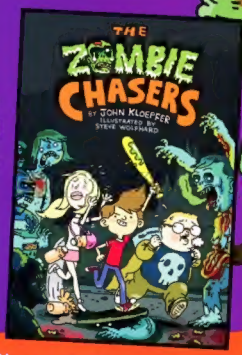

Illustrations by Steve Wolfhard

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